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NO 10

AS I SAW IT ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS

(By G. M. N. Parker.)

Like many others living in Wilkes county, seeing the holidays approaching and hearing the children talking about hanging up their stockings, I had a strong inclination to put my jug in one end of a sack, my next farm neighbor in the other, throw it across my plow mare and steal silently away to Hunting Creek. But since the revenue officers will no longer allow me to return whistling and singing, feeling richer than a Rockefeller, without proving that my jugs are filled with home-made sorghum, I persuaded my friend, C. M. Caudill, popular proprietor of North Wilkesboro's leading hotel, to take me in his little Ford, bid the hotel crowd good bye and start to acquaint myself with conditions across the Blue Ridge mountains.

With handkerchiefs on the hotel porch still waving high good-byes, our little Ford shied cautiously through the automobiles along the hard paved street, but when it rolled out on the soft country pike, smooth as a dusty floor, it sped off from under the city smoke like a Kentucky steed from a long stand in the stall as if with a little more Rockefeller rein it would go on up and play flying machine.

It was now nine o'clock. The sun was brightening up from the haze around the horizon and near-gauze-like clouds that moved motionless and high. The landscape billowed off east and west into distant smoke settling as if from forest fires, while eight miles ahead the Blue Ridge mountains—true to name—towered up in irregular form to the sky. The homes clear back to the sky line were oozing smoke up from their stone chimneys as if from covered fires, and the dust was rising along the many converging roads as if all the country people were coming to town. And they were filling our pike, in wagons, buggies and automobiles—some with baskets of eggs, some with buckets of butter, some with crates of poultry, some with stove wood, some with cross ties and some with lumber; some driving oxen, some mules and some horses; some with hounds tired from their previous night's possum-hunts, and some with their spruced up wives and children; some as if they owned both sides of the road and some bounding off and grabbing their blair-eyed horses by the bridle as if they wished they didn't have either.

Now and then a hardly bridle wise horse, hearing our honks, went in four directions at the same time and never stopped until he cleared the right of way. As if to equally distribute fright, occasionally a big truck loaded with lumber came blundering and bouncing along, from which our Lizzie shot off like a lizard into the brush or nosed up into the corner of the fence.

In the meantime the mountains, as if mistaking us for Christmas, were changing their blue for green, and by the time we had arrived at their feet they were gorgeously garbed in holly, laurel, rhododendron, mountain spruce and balsam pines, thru which their silver streams sparkled for tinsel and their cascades for old Santa's down the chimney here.

Our road now became a winding stair up through what seemed to be a mighty Christmas

tree, and on the overhanging evergreen boughs I fancied I saw the mountain fairies' empty stockings, waiting to be filled.

Finally reaching the top—a low place in the sky—at a rustic monument recently erected to Daniel Boone—we stopped and looked first at the landscape lowering away to the land of the long leaf pines and sweet gum groves, next turned and scanned what appeared to be the land of meadow valleys and chestnut and sugar maple groves—then concluded that the monument to the famous old hunter marks the gateway into another world; a world that has been known as the Lost Province—the Province that is locally known as Watauga, the Watauga to which civilized America has been asked to send missionaries to enlighten the benighted mountain folks.

With our Ford dropped from boiling to faintly simmering, we transferred our money to our inside pockets, held admiration services over our recently installed though not patented device for locking up our tires, tools and trinkets, mutually pledged refrainment from discussing religion, politics, moonshine or anything else that might diminish our safety while among the mountain folks, then started on under sunnier skies, through cooler breezes, along clearer streams, looking for a suitable place to eat dinner. Twenty minutes past twelve, rounding to the sunny side of a chestnut grove, a warm shelter from the breeze and water close by for our thirsty Ford, we stopped and took out our lunch to eat on the road side. While Mr. Caudill was spreading down a paper napkin and loading it with sandwiches, cakes and pies, three gentlemen and a shepherd dog, the latter under the belief that he was the whole cheese, came driving a drove of turkeys around the bend. Above the ka-ouking, the shepherd's barking and the men's shewing and swaying brushes in the rear, I asked them how far it was to Boone. One of them stopped and waited until the noises got further down the road, then replied that it was eight miles.

With dinner over, we hummed on along the new though becoming splendid highway to Boone, a seemingly unpretentious Athens in an Alps; where we were informed that a ten mile run in any direction, but more especially a circuitous one by way of the county high schools, would give us a true insight to the physical, financial and social standing of the whole county. Choosing the latter way and choosing Professor or Smith Hagaman, County Superintendent, to accompany us and interpret for us their unwritten mountain language, we hummed on along the Boone Trail which, though on a good grade, made "U's" and "S's" all the way.

The landscape billowed off before us in hills of uniform height to the horizon, on the western rim of which stood old Grandfather mountain with his head above timber line, smiling down as parentally and proudly as if all the hills and mountains in the Lost Province of Watauga were his children and grandchildren.

The valleys, uniform as the hills, were studded with great stacks of timothy hay, from which green carpets of luxuriant orchard grass stretched up the black loam hillsides to the chestnut groves and native forests on the highest peaks. With equal uniformity, restfully appearing homes—usually painted white—stood at the heads of the brooks

and along the creeks, most of them on beautiful lawns and under weeping willow or other equally attractive shade.

Whether it was due to the pure air, the pure water, or both, I cannot say, but everything that moved or had a being around the homes looked peculiarly healthy, healthy and clean. The ducks and geese paddling and squawking in the brooks and creeks looked so clean that I don't believe they could spill dirt with a dictionary. The droves of chickens cackling and crowing on the hillsides looked so clean that their roosts must have been swept and talcum powdered every morning. The thoroughbred cattle half dozing on the sunny sides of the haystacks looked so clean that one would think they never stepped off of their carpet of grass, and all in common, from the cats sunning on the doorsteps to the great flocks of South-downs contentedly browsing on the brush high on the hillsides, appeared to be happy in the belief that their exemplary lives would bring them back to Watauga to live when they died.

That evening, with the last sun rays fading from near-by Rich Mountain's highest peak, we stopped and helled at the gate of an average home, which brought out a gentleman whose identity I shall not reveal for the reason that when the Watauga people read my accusation I want it to make all of them go to asking, like Judas Iscariot, 'Lord is it I?'

Let it suffice to say that our request for lodging fell on friendly ears, and leaving our Ford to be chauffeured later into a tremendously big barn, we were conducted up a concrete walk and flight of steps to a broad veranda and along a hallway into a spacious sitting room warmed with a cheerful open fire blazing up over a great sugar maple backlog, well back around which leaned three or four cushion-seated rockers. A fancy rug too small for the room, left exposed around it a highly polished sugar maple floor, on which the flickers of the fire were starting their twilight dances. A fluffy bed sporting a home-made counterpane stood back in one corner and a combination writing desk and bookcase in the other. Two clocks ticked companionably on the mantel, and four or five motes and oil paintings hung artistically around the walls. An old fashioned fire shovel leaned against one jamb, a pair of tongs against the other, and through the cracks in the flames leaping up over the big backlog I got a glimpse of an old-fashioned pot rack.

Well above a walnut center table strewn with magazines and farm journals a golden chandelier was awaiting nightfall to burst into a blaze of electric light, while just inside the door a marble lavatory with a dipper hanging close by, offered sparkling water gravitated from an icy spring, for only turning a faucet.

As was this room, so turned out to be all the others, strictly modern. And even more than strictly modern was the dining room. Its spacious dining table circular in form, had in the center a kind of wheel of fortune on which was strung chicken, mutton, ham, eggs, kraut, beans, potatoes, hot biscuit, butter, cheese, preserves, cakes, custards and pies, with coffee and two kinds of milk on the side for the asking, none of which had ever so much as heard of a tin can or a paper sack. It was one kind of wheel of fortune that I could not turn without winning.

It made no difference where it stopped, I had five for one staring me in the face.

I shall not pretend to say that I found all the homes in Watauga as modern as this one—no; "the poor ye have with you alway" and the poor live in poor houses, but I found a higher per cent in what I call sweet homes than I have found in any other county in the state.

What I found true of homes I found true of schools. Truly, one reflects the other. In speaking of them I shall not try to dodge the fact that "as in the Superintendent so in the schools. Nevertheless I can give Professor Hagaman only passing credit for the high rating of these. True, he has been polished through his life-long association with the Watauga soil. True, he measures four square to the top of his calling, and then some. True he stands in the front ranks of that sterling type of manhood that pillars and pilots every movement that contributes toward a greater America; but it is not in any superintendent to begin where he began and in the brief period of six years bring all the log schoolhouses but one up to modern frames or bricks, add from one to three teachers to fully half the schools and raise the annual school fund from about \$18,000 to near \$52,000, without giving greatest credit to the school patrons.

In appreciation of his educational leadership he has been appointed Superintendent of Public Welfare, and his estimable wife county nurse. I suppose they will later go into training for President and Vice-President of the United States, but speaking candidly, the highest honors that can be conferred upon any man is the general custodianship of the youth of his native county. True, the work is hard and the responsibilities great, but it is a field in which we make all our great people.

On our way home we again stopped at the Boone monument in the gap crossing the Blue Ridge, and first taking a farewell look at cloudy-headed old Grandfather mountain, I turned and scanned the landscape lowering off under thickening haze to the sandy plains and on to the sea—every inch of which will ever be sweet to me—then admitted that there had been a crossing of names with Jacob and Esau, and that the term "Lost Province" ought to be applied to the plains country.

Speaking most candidly, it will be the dawning of a brighter day when we open our eyes to the fact that the Southern mountains are our American Land of Canaan. Of course, I shall not object to sending them missionaries to them, but it will be the survival of the fittest when Watauga sends a few to the flat country to help us restore our boasted though evanescent "Southern hospitality" and bring us to see that if we pattern after the mountain people we will have fewer reasons for wanting to go to a place like Watauga to live when we die.

A Good Modeling Material.
It is often very difficult to keep a child confined to the house amused. But with a modeling material with which they can make animals, beads, etc., they can be kept amused for hours. Take four tablespoonfuls cornstarch, eight tablespoonfuls salt and eight tablespoonfuls boiling water. Mix the dry ingredients and pour on the boiling water, stirring until the mixture is soft. Put on the fire and stir until it forms a soft ball, then remove from the stove and stir for ten minutes. A little color may be added. Wrap in oiled paper when not in use to keep from hardening.

NORTH CAROLINA MOURNS PASSING OF WAR GOVERNOR

Thomas Walter Bickett Dies of Stroke of Paralysis. Burial at Louisburg

Thomas Walter Bickett died at 9:15 last Thursday morning.

He did not regain consciousness after suffering a stroke of paralysis shortly before nine o'clock Wednesday night. That day he was in his law office, worked in his garden in the afternoon and prepared supper for himself and Mrs. Bickett, who herself, watched at his bedside all night.

His body laid in state in the capitol until 11 o'clock Friday when funeral was held in Christ Episcopal Church. Interment was at Louisburg in Franklin county.

North Carolina truly mourns the loss of this noble son who so successfully piloted the ship of state through the great world war crisis. He was a statesman, peace maker, progressive leader, an ideal christian citizen, and it may be long before we see his like. What more could we say of anyone, than that in all the word implies "he was a man"?

ADVERTISE WHEN BUSINESS IS BAD:

(By John Buford Brock.)

It is sad, but nevertheless true, that when business begins to get bad there are so many organizations that think the first thing for them to do is to stop their advertising.

Much like a terrapin, when he sees danger approaching, pulls his head into his shell and stimulates death in order that no one may molest him and the danger may be avoided. Rain or flood will not avail in opening up that shell. He will stay inside there until the warm sun on his back informs him that all is fair outside and that there is little danger of his losing a head by looking around for something to eat.

On the other hand there are many men who have found that their business was stimulated and progressive when business with the neighbor was very poor. There are the men who advertise to the public to BUY NOW. There are certain necessities of life that cannot be dissented with and it is one sure bet that out of several business houses having commodities for which there is a demand, the one who advertises his goods regularly and systematically will draw trade from the houses who have neglected to keep the trade informed that they were still in business.

Advertise to remind your clients that you are still in business, even if you do not want to advertise for more business. The old customers will wander into the advertised path. And why shouldn't they?

You or I are customers of each other. We are looking for places to trade, and the places for trading is done by other people. This fact is one grand advertisement for the busy store. Unless the new or small place advertises the advantage in trading elsewhere it is only reasonable to assume that he is not going to get much of the trade.

If the smaller places advertise, as many of them do continuously and regularly remind their customers of the service, the savings and the pleasantness received there, and the other places do not advertise, it is shown every day that trade shifts to the advertised places.

BIG DEVELOPMENT FOR BLOWING ROCK

Leonard Tufts Interested in a New Hotel Alexander Planning Improvements (Lenoir News-Topic)

There is promise of big development at Blowing Rock for the new year. It is reported here that Leonard Tufts of Boston, the man who is responsible for the development at Pinehurst and the surrounding section into a world-famed winter resort, has been financially interested at Blowing Rock in a hotel project to be built during the present year. The superintendent of Mr. Tuft's Pinehurst property spent several days at Blowing Rock during the past month. The report here of Mr. Tufts becoming financially interested in Blowing Rock hotel property is accepted as a promise of great development within the next few seasons. It is believed that through him hundreds of wealthy men from the north and east will also become interested.

Last year Mr. W. L. Alexander had plans drawn for a 150-room hotel to be built adjoining the Mayview Club House. The construction of the hotel was delayed last season. However, according to Mr. Alexander's friends here, the building will be begun at an early date and it is hoped to have it completed to take care of part of the coming summer's business. The new hotel will have 150 bed rooms, and every room will have a private bath. This building will be thoroughly modern. The rustic effect will be carried out in the architecture, the outside of the building being made of bark so as to harmonize with the Club House.

A moving picture theater is being planned by W. L. Alexander and J. G. Ballew, a local druggist. This theater will be ready for the coming season. The theater will be constructed along the same plan that all of the cottages and Club House on the Mayview property have been built. Mr. Alexander also plans to build several new cottages and to enlarge the child's hospital. Work has already begun on the golf course on the Mayview Park property. The course is being built under the direction of Robert Ross, one of the most celebrated golf course builders in the United States. This course will be completed and ready for the next season.

Ironing Board Cover.

Cut and hem a piece of unbleached muslin, about four inches wider and longer than your ironing board, so that it laps over about two inches under the board. Then crochet an edge of six chain and fasten, and so on until you have edged the entire piece. Lay the cloth on the board, turn over and lace it with a stout cord or tape, the same as you would lace a shoe—using, however, only about every fourth loop. The cover can be easily removed and washed.

Advertising your establishment is like advertising a brand of goods, hosiery or soft drink specialty. The customer calls for the advertised specialty. He patronizes the advertised store.

In bad times your business is going to follow the signs of the times unless you throw an extra effort in the work and find the features which can be advertised, then advertise them.

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